

## **Surviving Winter Weather**

### **Winter Driving in Wisconsin**

It is important for all of us to prepare for the power of winter storms. Few of us will forget the Groundhog Day Blizzard of 2011.

Here are some Driving tips. Be gentle with both the accelerator and brake. Don't use cruise control in wintry conditions. Don't be overconfident in your four-wheel drive vehicle. You may get going quicker than others but you can't stop faster. Four-wheel drive vehicles can lose traction as quickly as two-wheel drive.

Carry a winter storm survival kit in the back seat of your vehicle (in case your trunk jams or is frozen shut) that includes:

- Blankets or sleeping bags
- Flashlight with extra batteries
- First-aid kit
- Shovel, tools, booster cables and windshield scraper
- High-calorie non-perishable food (raisins, candy bars, energy/protein bars, etc.)
- Sand or cat litter to use for traction
- Cell phone adapter

### **Safety First - Stay Informed**

**The National Weather Service (NWS) issues winter storm warnings and watches. Here's what they mean and what you should do.**

**Winter Storm Watch** – Winter storm conditions (heavy snow, sleet and freezing rain) are possible within the next 36-48 hours. Continue monitoring the weather forecast.

**Winter Storm or Ice Storm Warning** – A significant winter event is occurring or will begin in the next 24 hours. The combination of snow, sleet, freezing rain and moderate winds will impact travel and outdoor activities. An Ice Storm Warning is issued when mostly freezing rain is expected with ice accumulations of 1/4 inch or more within a 12-hour period. Take necessary precautions – consider canceling travel plans.

**Blizzard Warning** – A dangerous event with winds that are 35 mph or greater in combination with falling and/or blowing snow that reduces visibility to 1/4 mile or less for a duration of at least 3 hours.

### **Be Prepared**

Some of the dangers associated with winter storms include loss of heat, power and telephone service and a shortage of supplies. To help protect your family, now is the time to put together a disaster supply kit. Here are some items to include:

- Flashlights and extra batteries
- Battery-powered NOAA Weather Radio and a commercial radio
- Bottled water and non-perishable food that requires no cooking
- First-aid supplies
- Fire extinguisher, smoke detector and carbon monoxide detector
- If appropriate, extra medications and baby items
- If you have an emergency heating source such as a fireplace or space heater, make sure you have proper ventilation
- Make sure pets have shelter and plenty of food and water

For additional information, contact your [county emergency management office](#), the [National Weather Service](#) or ReadyWisconsin. Tips on winter safety, developing your own personal preparedness plan and building an emergency kit can also be found at the following website: <http://www.weather.gov>